

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 276

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the attachment therapy technique known as rebirthing is a dangerous practice and should be prohibited.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 18, 2005

Mr. SALAZAR (for himself, Mr. BURR, and Mrs. DOLE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the attachment therapy technique known as rebirthing is a dangerous practice and should be prohibited.

Whereas “rebirthing” is the most dangerous form of attachment therapy, a controversial and scientifically unsupported form of therapy that claims to treat emotionally disturbed children by using physical restraints;

Whereas rebirthing techniques attempt to reenact the birth process by restraining a child with blankets or other materials and forcing the child to emerge unaided;

Whereas rebirthing techniques are based on the erroneous assumption that a reenactment of the birth process will treat children with reactive attachment disorder, a psychiatric condition characterized by the inability to form emotional attachments, by purging the child of rage re-

sulting from past mistreatment and allowing the child to form stronger emotional attachments in the future;

Whereas attachment therapists claim rebirthing techniques create new bonds between adopted children and adoptive parents and often use rebirthing techniques in therapy sessions with adoptive families;

Whereas in 2000, Candace Newmaker, a 10-year-old child from North Carolina, died from suffocation, after being wrapped in flannel sheets, covered with pillows, and leaned on by 4 adults to simulate contractions, when Candace became trapped by the sheets because she was forcibly restrained by these adults and could not emerge through her own efforts to be reborn into her adoptive family;

Whereas between 1995 and 2005, at least 4 other children in the United States have died from other forms of attachment therapy;

Whereas the American Psychiatric Association, a national medical specialty society that focuses on the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental illnesses, maintains that no scientific evidence supports the effectiveness of rebirthing techniques;

Whereas in 2002, Paul S. Appelbaum, M.D., President of the American Psychiatric Association, condemned rebirthing techniques as “extreme methods [that] pose serious risk and should not be used under any circumstances”; and

Whereas several States have enacted or are considering legislation to prohibit the use of rebirthing techniques: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

1 (1) rebirthing, an attachment therapy technique
2 that reenacts the birth process by physically re-
3 straining a child and forcing the child to emerge
4 unaided, is dangerous, potentially life-threatening,
5 and unsupported by scientific evidence; and

6 (2) each State should enact laws prohibiting the
7 use of rebirthing techniques.

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